2014

Dawnland Voices

Siobhan Senier

DAWNLAND VOICES

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DAWNLAND VOICES

AN ANTHOLOGY OF INDIGENOUS WRITING FROM NEW ENGLAND

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CONTENTS

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More people than I can name, and certainly more than I could keep track of, helped during this project, from its initial conception, to finding and contacting writers, to tracking down copyright holders, to the final layout and presentation.

I can't quite describe what a great honor it was, and how humbling, to work with these eleven community editors. They are astonishingly brilliant knowledge keepers, and their commitment to sustaining their communities and traditions is breathtaking. Each one put in countless hours pulling this material together, teaching me about local literary traditions, and conveying the importance of this project to their friends and neighbors. Their expertise is tremendous, and they shared it generously and patiently.

Additionally, all of the living writers included here contributed much more than their own work: they solicited fellow tribal members for additional writings and put up with my endless questions about locations, language, and history.

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Melissa Clark donated many hours of her time and expertise to creating a map of the territory described in this book. Mapping is tricky and political business, and in the end, the tribal editors were unable to agree on a single map of indigenous homeland in the northeast. I regret that I did not recognize this much earlier in the book-making process, but I thank Melissa for her generosity and refer readers to the many excellent maps that can be found on individual tribal websites.

I am undoubtedly forgetting individuals to whom I owe some sizable debt of gratitude, and I apologize sincerely to anyone I've left out: Kate April, Rocky Bear (Maliseet), Charles Brilvitch, Wendi-Starr Brown (Narragansett), Ana Caguiat, Amy Den Ouden, Thomas Doughton (Nipmuc), Burt Feintuch, James Finley, Jessica Fish, James Francis (Penobscot), Geneva Marie Gano, Maria Girouard (Penobscot), Rae Gould (Nipmuc), Joyce Heywood (Abenaki), Luke Joseph (Passamaquoddy), Robert Leavitt, Michael LeBlanc, Dyani Lee (Narragansett), Joan Lester, Drew Lopenzina, Margo Lukens, Pauleena MacDougall, Jason Mancini, Daniel Mandell, Rodger Martin, Donna Roberts Moody (Abenaki), John Moody, Tom Silver Fox Morse (Nipmuc), Wayne Newell (Passamaquoddy), Bonnie Newsom and other members of the Penobscot Cultural Heritage Preservation Commission, Robert Dale Parker, Dan Paul (Mi'kmaq), Micah Pawling, Shoran Piper (Golden Hill Paugussett), Paul Pouliot (Abenaki), Rick Pouliot (Abenaki), Dale Potts, Kathy Sebastian (Eastern Pequot), David Slagger (Maliseet), David Stewart-Smith (Abenaki), David Watters, Margaret Way, Hilary Wyss, Bill Yellow Robe Jr. (Assiniboine).

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DAWNLAND VOICES

Introduction

Siobhan Senier

Years ago, when I started thinking about this anthology, I had what I thought was a simple, practical need. I was hired to teach Native American literature, first at the University of Maine and then at the University of New Hampshire, and I wanted to include local authors. But that literature was maddeningly hard to find. Aside from two repeatedly mentioned early writers—the Mohegan minister Samson Occom and Pequot minister-activist William Apess—I kept hearing that "there just aren't any" Native American authors in this area.

Now, I had been taught in graduate school that "there just aren't any" is almost always a lie. So I kept looking. I did have company: like-minded colleagues, including Margaret Lukens at the University of Maine and Lisa Brooks (Abenaki), now at Amherst College.[1] With their help, I started finding writers: dazzling, contemporary poets like Cheryl Savageau (Abenaki), inventive novelists like John Christian Hopkins (Narragansett), powerful essayists like Donna Loring (Penobscot), and intriguing earlier writers like the diarist Fidelia Fielding (Mohegan) and the historian Lewis Mitchell (Passamaquoddy). I found, in fact, more indigenous New England authors than I could read, teach, or even count. More to the point, I found more than I could keep xeroxing for my classes, since works by these writers were very often out of print or unpublished. Hence the need for a ready compendium.

The idea of an anthology like this was apparently a new one. Acquaintances and even well-informed colleagues were usually surprised ("There's Native American literature *here*?"). Avid readers have at least heard that Native American literature exists, but some believe "it was all oral tradition." If they have read any Native authors at all, these are almost always from the Southwest or Great Plains. On shelves labeled "American Indian" in your local bookstore, writers from New England are almost always neglected.[2] That neglect, I soon learned, has deep historic and political roots and does damaging work to the indigenous people who still live here.

The myth of the "vanishing Indian" is very old, and by no means peculiar to New England: it has permeated American culture from *The Last of the Mohicans* to *Dances with Wolves*. But the myth exercises special force east of the Mississippi, where colonization happened earliest; and it takes a particular shape in New England, where European settlers have, from the beginning, been keen to install themselves as the "first" Americans.[3] Yankees like to believe that Native people "died off" (or "lost") early on and that those who didn't die were "assimilated" or have "very little real Indian blood." Few citizens are educated about the barrage of state and federal policies that have been consistently enacted and retooled, to this very day, to terminate Native communities in New England as well as across the rest of the United States: educational policies removing Native children from their homes and penalizing Native language use; land use policies aimed at breaking up Native collectivities; bizarre blood-quantum requirements claiming that Native identity "dissolves" with intermarriage.[4]

The writers in *Dawnland Voices* describe and challenge those policies in their own writings, appropriately enough, because writing has always been a key colonial tool. Historian Jill Lepore, for example, has traced how the earliest Puritan historians narrated (and renarrated) King Philip's War (1675–76) as the effective "end" of Native presence in the Northeast. In that same century, the state of Connecticut made it illegal even to use the name "Pequot" (O'Brien 31); other states followed with similar "detribalization" laws.[5] Soon, New England census and other records began recasting indigenous people as "colored," "mulatto," "French"—anything but "Indian"—in what some Native people call "pencil genocide."[6] And then local and town historians joined the effort. In *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England*, Jean O'Brien (Ojibwe) reads hundreds of these town histories from Maine to Rhode Island. Year after year, she finds, local historians eulogized "the last of the tribe"—so enthusiastically and consistently, in fact, that they created a landscape "thickly populated by 'last'" members of a given "race" (113).

The New England case illustrates why the Australian scholar Patrick Wolfe has called invasion a "structure, not an event" (2). In settler colonialism, the colonizers keep invading: first physically, with war and disease; then culturally and ideologically, with more "humane" attempts to "civilize" indigenous people; and politically and economically, through policies designed to thwart tribal self-governance. As the authors included

below explain, those policies currently take the form of state blockage of tribal economic enterprise (as in Rhode Island) and interference with tribal environmental protection of traditional homelands and waterways (as in Maine). If there is one thing the culturally diverse tribal nations represented in this volume have in common, it is the enduring popular conception that they no longer exist, or that those who would assert their heritage and rights are merely "casino-grubbing" or somehow standing in the way of modern economic "development."

Dawnland Voices thus joins an ongoing effort to help document and represent Native people's *continuous presence* in New England.[7] As you will see throughout this anthology, indigenous New Englanders have had to say it again and again: "We're still here."

No anthology ever satisfies all readers, and no anthology is ever complete. But even among readers, teachers, and editors who know these things, anthologies carry a heavy burden. A classroom tome like the *Norton Anthology of World Literature* promises comprehensive coverage. The annual *Best American Poetry* series implies the highest standards of taste, plus national pride. Popular collections like the Chicken Soup series offer feelings of community with other people in similar straits: the grieving, the preteen, the dog lover, even the "executive" or the "prisoner." We might say, then, that anthologies have a politics, insofar as an anthology on your bookshelf, or your Kindle, does more than "introduce" you to a certain body of literature; an anthology can also confer membership in a particular group or a kind of distinction.

Perhaps this explains why Karen Kilcup, herself a thoughtful anthologist, has said there is no escaping this central fact: "an anthology creates a miniature canon, no matter how resistant the editor is to the vexed notions of goodness and importance" (113). Some anthologies self-consciously try to push back against this canonizing tendency. In *Reinventing the Enemy's Language: Contemporary Native Women's Writings of North America*, for instance, poets Joy Harjo (Muscogee) and Gloria Bird (Spokane) included many previously unpublished writers because they wanted specifically to represent women who had made major contributions to their tribal communities. A more recent collection, one that has greatly influenced the volume at hand, is Kristina Bross and Hilary Wyss's *Early Native Literacies in New England*, which encourages readers to look for Indian

literature in unexpected places: in historic petitions, for example, and even in nonalphabetic forms like baskets.

Dawnland Voices tries to follow these books' lead. In particular, it redistributes the evaluation of literary "goodness" and "importance" to a much wider range of people than the usual editorial team or individual. Our team includes one non-Native college professor (me) and eleven Native American community editors—some of them academics, some community-based intellectuals, some elders, some rising stars. During the collection and selection process, all of us consulted with much larger networks of Native and non-Native writers, teachers, readers, and scholars. The resulting volume is thus extremely varied and includes a range of pieces that you might not usually see in a collection of "literary" writings: recipes, hip-hop lyrics, blog entries, children's poems.

There is a well-established tradition of literary "recovery" that depends on a dedicated researcher toiling alone in archives to unearth forgotten writers and republish their work for new appreciation. Many lost classics, especially by women and authors of color, have been rediscovered this way. Nina Baym scoured dusty library shelves for hundreds of nineteenth-century women's novels, many of which are now back in print and taught in literature classes thanks to her study *Woman's Fiction: A Guide to Novels by and about Women in America, 1820–1870* (1978). Henry Louis Gates likewise excavated African American treasures like Harriet Wilson's 1859 novel *Our Nig*—now republished, reexamined by other scholars, and recelebrated in Wilson's hometown of Milford, New Hampshire.

Besides the obvious baggage associated with the word "discovery" in the context of Native Americans in the United States, it does not really describe what happened as I compiled *Dawnland Voices*. Very occasionally, I did manage to find a forgotten Native author in an archive: the nineteenth-century Narragansett hymnist Thomas Commuck is one example. More often, when I brought such a "discovery" to Native people, they were either already familiar with that writer or far less interested in him or her than in some others, better known within their communities.

This is instructive, I think, for the current structures awarding "credit" to academics. For example, while academic and Native communities rightly honor Barry O'Connell for his definitive edition of the writings of William Apess, many Pequot and Wampanoag people actively remembered Apess and his work long before the 1992 publication of *On Our Own Ground: The*

Complete Writings of William Apess, a Pequot. Similarly, Annette Kolodny did something important by annotating and republishing Joseph Nicolar's 1891 *Life and Traditions of the Red Man* through Duke University Press in 2007, but Penobscot people had long been recirculating that book on and around Indian Island in Maine, sometimes selling ten-dollar xeroxed copies in the local gas stations and sometimes debating Nicolar's contributions to Penobscot culture and history. Academics, in other words, didn't "discover" these writers.

University-based scholars often think we know in advance what we want to ask of community collaborators, but if we are really willing to ask, and really willing to listen, they often take us in unexpected directions. Literary scholars have been, perhaps, a little slower to recognize this than anthropologists, who have a longer and deeper investment in fieldwork. Some of the best anthropologists, like Julie Cruikshank and Naomi Adelson, have found that their indigenous partners redirected and reshaped their very research questions. So I have tried hard to listen to Native people. For instance, I was interested in Commuck myself, partly because he wrote political letters in rhymed quatrains, but most Narragansett people with whom I spoke were more attached to the seemingly more homely writers of the 1935–36 magazine *Narragansett Dawn*. Wampanoag people at Mashpee, meanwhile, were entirely respectful of William Apess's historical work there, but it is Mabel Avant's poetry that they recite aloud at their community events. If you ask Abenaki people what books are important to them, they might show you old, well-thumbed copies of language primers by Joseph Laurent or Henry Lorne Masta. Passamaquoddy people often refer to Russell Bassett, published only on their tribal website, as one of their most beloved poets. This kind of tribal literature connects people to homeland, kin, and neighbors, to tribal language, histories, and traditions. In many cases these poems, novels, and essays are virtually unknown outside their communities—and (as Kolodny found when she annotated Nicolar) their "goodness" and "importance" are not always immediately transparent to outsiders.

Thus, even though it made for a more unwieldy, occasionally contentious, and infinitely *longer* publishing process, I enlisted the help of community editors. Academics who conduct what is now called "engaged" or "outreach" scholarship know that this is a serendipitous, unpredictable process, alternately frustrating and rewarding. I started by asking

people I knew, usually Native scholars and writers I had invited to my classes and with whom I gradually built relationships over time, including Dawn Dove (Narragansett). In other cases, my closest contacts were unable to take on the editorial work themselves, but they put me in contact with knowledgeable people who could—for example, Stephanie Fielding (Mohegan) and Donald Soctomah (Passamaquoddy). In still other cases, I had to follow the chain of contacts much longer—sometimes for years, sometimes through blind phone calls to tribal historic preservation officers, sometimes even into email and Facebook. I connected with at least two wonderful editors—Jaime Battiste (Mi'kmaq) and Cheryl Stedtler (Nipmuc)—online long before I got to meet them face to face.

I wanted to organize this book by tribal nation because I have come to value the tribally oriented scholarship of writers like Craig Womack (Muscogee), who has said, very reasonably, that if you want to understand Native American literature, you had better know something about the tribal context from which it came.[8] This approach seemed to fit with what I was hearing from community members, too: Passamaquoddy people read very deeply among Passamaquoddy writers; Wampanoag people had detailed knowledge of the chronology of Wampanoag historians and poets; Narragansett people had a distinct sense of literary genealogy emanating from that 1935 magazine. In the table of contents, these tribal nations are organized more or less north to south, and readers unfamiliar with the territory can follow many of the locations that appear in the writings along almost any regional map. One virtue of this pattern is that it highlights some connections across communities: for instance, among Wabanaki peoples in Maine and between Narragansett and Wampanoag groups in southern New England.

I should note that my choice to organize the volume this way also created some exclusions. "Nations"—conceived of as ethnic/cultural entities that coincide with geopolitical borders—are modern constructs; as the Kanien'kehaka political theorist Taiaiake Alfred has pointedly remarked, "Neither the state-sponsored modifications to the colonial-municipal model (imposed in Canada through the Indian Act and in the United States through the Indian Reorganization Act) nor the corporate or public-government systems recently negotiated in the North constitute indigenous governments at all" (3). Put a little more simply, political designations like "Abenaki" or "Schaghticoke" are relatively recent arrivals and don't

necessarily reflect the variety of bands and communities that consider themselves affiliated yet distinct. Moreover, the exigencies of book publishing, combined with the exigencies of the community-editor model itself, meant that some nations fell out altogether—the fault of the process, not any indication that these groups have no writing worth including. The Pequots, for instance—a huge omission in this book—are inundated with requests to "collaborate" with scholars, often hesitant to become involved with researchers they don't know well, and (as happened as this project came to deadline) simply oversubscribed with other work. Yet there is a considerable body of Pequot writing that reaches back before the monumental figure of William Apess and continues up to the filmmaker Rebecca Perry Levy. The bibliographies throughout the book are meant to direct readers to some of those omissions.

My original intent was to limit this collection to original writing, not transcribed oral tradition, and to writing in English, not in Native languages. Transcribed oral traditions have a vexed history, *especially* in anthologies; many of the most enduring "Indian" collections, like Jerome Rothenberg's *Shaking the Pumpkin: Traditional Poetry of the Indian North Americas* (1972), aren't really "Indian" at all but consist of loose "translations" of traditional narratives and other forms.[9] Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna) once derided transcribed oral narratives as outright cultural theft, on the grounds that these traditions were either completely misrepresented in print or never should have been written down in the first place.[10] And then there is the whole genre of "as-told-to" American Indian memoirs, of which *Black Elk Speaks* is only the most notorious, which are often much more heavily edited than their non-Native "coauthors" have been inclined to admit.[11]

On the other hand, the community editors for this volume often insisted that transcribed oral traditions, and certainly Native-language texts, were among their most important literary productions. In some cases, Native people like Claudia Chicklas (Abenaki) have written down family traditions on their own. Others, like Jesse Bruchac (Abenaki) or Ella Sekatau (Narragansett), have retranslated earlier writings into their indigenous languages or created altogether new writing in those languages. Even some of the more "corrupt" texts by non-Native ethnographers, like Abby Alger's recordings of stories from Maine, sometimes appear in the bibliographies of this book, because they have been useful to Native

communities, often reappropriated by them for purposes of cultural and linguistic revitalization.

One final editorial choice worth noting is my decision to organize the literature chronologically. I wanted to emphasize continuous presence—the reality that indigenous people have written, and written in English, since very soon after European arrival and have continued to do so, in every Euro-American form as well as some deeply "indigenous" ones. But readers will immediately notice large historical gaps in each chapter. Again, the absence (to take just one example) of very early Schaghticoke writings doesn't mean that Schaghticoke people weren't writing in the seventeenth century; it means only that the community editors chose to emphasize more recent work. Hopefully, readers will take these gaps as invitations to try and find, reprint, and reread that literature; at the very least, readers should be aware that the gaps tell us much more about Native people's access to (and perhaps interest in) the mechanics of publishing and preservation than they do about what Native people were actually writing at a given historical moment.

In choosing which texts to present, and how, I deferred to the community editors, though they varied in how they approached these choices. Some took almost total responsibility for collecting the writings. The outstandingly efficient Stephanie Fielding (Mohegan) put a notice in the tribal newsletter calling for submissions; she and I were also in frequent conversation about the evolving chapter with then-Tribal Librarian/Archivist Faith Davison and Medicine Woman Melissa Tantaquidgeon Zobel. In Maine, Donald Soctomah (Passamaquoddy) solicited contributions through his extensive interpersonal networks; Cheryl Stedtler (Nipmuc), working from her home in New Jersey, collected writing almost entirely via email, while also combing through her own extensive archives.

While some living writers (particularly those who are already published) asked the editorial team to choose which texts to include, we always encouraged them to submit pieces of their own choice. This method—which Lisa Brooks has called a "relinquishment of editorial control to the gathering place"—yielded some fascinating continuities, as in the Abenaki case (where many writers "home in" on the Connecticut River Valley), or the Wampanoag case (where writers return to particular events in colonial history).[12]

The Penobscots have a unique structure, an entire Cultural and Historic Preservation Department, which asks scholars working with Penobscot materials to come discuss their work in progress. So although Carol Dana, the Penobscot community editor, was relatively hands-off herself when it came to determining which texts were in or out, the Penobscot chapter benefited from input from a sizable group of knowledgeable and authoritative tribal members, who weighed in about which writers they felt best represented Penobscot history and interests.

In a few cases, community editors had distinct visions of what they wanted their respective tribal sections to accomplish. Joan Tavares Avant (Wampanoag) came to the project with a distinct historical mission, wanting to highlight the Wampanoags' continuous presence at Mashpee and Aquinnah; as such, she tended to gravitate toward historical writings. Two editors from up north, each working with some of the larger slates of *published* tribal writing, crafted chapters that emphasize tribal writing as a *nation-building* enterprise. Jaime Battiste (Mi'kmaq) is a legal scholar, and as such, he chose texts that demonstrate the continuity and power of Mi'kmaq law and sovereignty. Lisa Brooks (Abenaki), whose knowledge of early regional Native writing is encyclopedic, strategically selected texts underscoring Abenaki commitment to tribal homeland, community, language, and story. These chapters, and others, challenge the very shape of "New England" by showing how these tribal nations preexisted, and continue to traverse, state and national borders.

Not all Native communities have such well-oiled intratribal communicative structures or elders or junior scholars with the time and resources to coordinate a tribal anthology. This meant that some nations were not quite ready to be included, even though tribal members expressed interest and even though those nations have produced ample bodies of writing (e.g., Golden Hill Paugussett in Connecticut). This nearly happened with the Maliseet chapter, but Juana Perley (one of several Maliseet people with whom I had been in conversation with over the past few years) stepped in at the last moment to provide an introduction to the small slate of literature I had been able to amass with guidance from her and some of the other Maliseet writers included here.

Even where tribal input was the most widespread and vigorous (e.g., Mohegan, Penobscot, and Passamaquoddy), "tribal input" should not be taken to mean that any tribe has somehow "officially" signed off on the

present project—nor, certainly, that every tribal member would agree with every selection or even approve of the direction of the tribal chapter overall. All of the community editors were keenly aware of the limitations of the anthology, particularly because we needed to set limits on the length of tribal chapters lest the book become too big to print, and finally because we needed to impose deadlines lest the book never appear at all. Under such constraints, everyone involved in this project readily acknowledges that the current selection is only a snapshot of much larger literary traditions—that, indeed, they were often working from the knowledge, memory, and agendas of a finite number of people, not from any "objective," definitive determination of what constituted the "best" writings. Karen Kilcup is probably right that every anthology, wittingly or unwittingly, creates a "miniature canon," but anthologists can at least remind themselves, and their readers: *It could have been otherwise*.

Many standard statements of editorial practice, particularly in academic books, give readers a sense of what to look for in terms of uniformity—where and how obvious misspellings were corrected, and so on. This was difficult in the present volume for several reasons.

Among the many forms of violence that Euro-Americans have inflicted on Native people, there is editorial violence. It isn't inflicted *only* on indigenous writers (Emily Dickinson's distinctive and indispensable punctuation was initially "corrected" out of existence), but editing has a particular, colonial baggage in Native literary history. One of the premises of this volume is that Native people began writing in English very early on, for purposes of cultural survival and self-determination; but it has to be acknowledged as well that they did so precisely because writing initially arrived as another form of colonial violence. Some of the earliest writings reproduced here (like the Dartmouth and Carlisle school letters) show how authorities often coerced Native people to write what they wanted to hear. By the late nineteenth century many writers, like Lewis Mitchell (Passamaquoddy), were being heavily edited, in ways that we can't always know or reconstruct.

Heavy editing and influence over content are also not peculiar to Native writing; *all* writing, Native or non-Native, is mediated. Anyone who has ever taught writing—or, for that matter, anyone who has ever written a sentence for another's inspection—knows this; but in practice, most

writers and editors also find themselves newly surprised (and sometimes alarmed) by how readily "correcting" a text slides into changing its meaning. The writers and editors working on *Dawnland Voices* knew it too, and we had some interesting conversations, and occasional disagreements, about what to change, what to annotate, what to edit.

The bulk of this writing was initially unpublished or self-published in the form of small-run pamphlets through entities like Amazon or (increasingly) online; some were also originally disseminated through small, low-budget local newsletters. In turn, some of those were archived in small personal and tribal collections, sometimes as clippings or digital photographs without complete information about their provenance. Native communities, in fact, maintain remarkably good stewardship of their literary traditions—far better stewardship, in many cases, than the best-funded libraries and the most esteemed publishing houses—but they don't necessarily do it according to the mandates of those institutions. Some of the texts included below, then, lack some of the attribution of titles, dates, and other information that academics tend to demand.

Further, as noncommercial, community-oriented works with limited distribution, many of these poems, stories, and speeches contained most of the mechanical errors and inconsistencies you usually find in such publications. Where it was immediately apparent that errors were genuinely errors, the community editors and I made a first pass at correcting them, followed by professional copyeditors. My own wish was to make corrections with the lightest possible hand, so as not to sacrifice some of the aesthetic edginess that, personally, I have always found most challenging and interesting as a reader of Native American literature. Still, in some cases writers pushed back; so readers accustomed to the more uniform editing practices of university presses may be brought up short by some idiosyncratic choices across the collection—in capitalization or in poetic syntax, for instance. In other cases, some authors chose not to make their birth years known; still others preferred not to annotate certain Native-language terms, events, or locations.

Tlingit author Nora Marks Dauenhauer, who has worked with nonacademic Tlingit community members to record traditional stories, has explained this dynamic usefully: she finds that community members are usually "eager to write down local traditions, but are not willing to learn and use a standard orthography," adding that, "[w]hereas literacy

is perceived by teachers, linguists and folklorists as a purely technical matter, for members of the indigenous community it can be a profound emotional issue deeply bound up with group identity and self-concept" (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 13). Therefore, as much as possible we (community editors, copyeditors, the press, and I) tried to respect authors' stated wishes. If the author is living, we returned the piece to him or her for approval. Where the author is deceased, the community editors had the final say.

As all of these details about procedure might suggest, *Dawnland Voices* has been years in the making, and the manuscript and its individual submissions have gone through countless iterations. When I say we respected authors' wishes "as much as possible," I mean "as much as we could manage and control," given the large number of people involved in submitting, reading, formatting, and editing the text. Any writer who has published knows that from time to time undesired changes and errors slip through even the most scrupulous editing processes. I take full responsibility for any such changes or errors.

Once you deliberately involve even more than the usual hordes of people in the production of a book, you become acutely aware that everything—the table of contents, the arrangement of the materials, the editing—could indeed have been otherwise. In this sense the community editors and I were like teachers creating a course syllabus. Teachers have a finite number of days to cover a topic, so they are forced to make hard choices, always aware that there are other choices that could do just as well. Classes have to start at a certain point with a subject, after all, and teachers have to make decisions, justifying them as best they can. Most of the best teachers I know are continually revising their classes, and many even "de-center" them by inviting students to contribute readings and assignments.

Some of the community editors and I started to wonder: what if we could do this with a book? The rapidly expanding and shifting world of digital publishing is opening up (and complicating) just such possibilities for the dissemination of writing, for literary form, for conversations among authors and readers. As this book goes to press, a few of the editors and I, along with some of my students, are starting to experiment with web-based anthologizing. *Writing of Indigenous New England* (indigenousnewengland.com) promises to be a wonderfully rich and easy-to-use interface allowing

writers, tribal historic preservation officers, local archivists, and others at different locations to upload materials of their own choice, annotating and editing them as they see fit.

We can think of *Dawnland Voices* as a hub and the website as offering different "spokes."[13] The first spoke is a collaborative bibliography. In the tribal chapters that follow, we offer bibliographies that help readers find further literature within particular tribal traditions. But bibliographies, of course, are infinitely extensible, so we have created a collaborative online listing available for additions, subtractions, and revisions from anyone who cares to log on (https://www.zotero.org/groups/indigenous_new_england_literature).

The second spoke (or set of spokes) is our online exhibit space, since the anthology itself is also extensible. In *Writing of Indigenous New England*, authorized editors and contributors can begin uploading the many texts we couldn't include in this book: letters from family archives, tribal newsletters, out-of-print poetry and fiction, even born-digital work. Our website uses the Omeka platform developed by George Mason University's Center for History and New Media; this platform allows curators to organize material by "collection" (in our case, by tribal nation) or by "exhibit." To date, I have found that an exhibit makes an excellent project for a class and a community partner: college students can provide the interpretive and technical work that a local historical society or tribal historian might need in preserving and disseminating materials. Our first exhibit—a collaboration between the Mt. Kearsarge Indian Museum in Warner, New Hampshire, and students in ENG 740: Native American Writing before 1800—focused on Abenaki baskets as texts. It is my hope that colleagues at other universities will partner with tribal historians, authors, museums, and other entities to produce new knowledge about regional indigenous literary traditions.

Finally, any book can be a hub for conversation and exchange among readers and writers, so another "spoke" of our online site involves social networking. One of the most enjoyable and enlightening parts of compiling this anthology was the part that, right now, most readers can't see: the conversations, questions, and debates that surrounded particular texts or editorial decisions. *Writing of Indigenous New England* has an online reading group (brokered at goodreads.com) where readers, students, tribal community members, and authors can "speak back" to the literature,

explaining what makes it meaningful, even arguing with it and generating new writing in response.

In both print and online formats, regional indigenous writings could see their "afterlives" greatly expanded—to borrow a term from the literary historian Janice Radway, who has been writing about another marginalized body of work: 1990s girl "zines." Radway's assessment of these edgy, low-budget magazines resonates nicely with many of the texts contained in *Dawnland Voices*: she views them as "complex aesthetic performances that defy and disorient those who would try to make sense of them in conventional ways" (147). Like many other disempowered groups, Native American people will continue to write, often defining and promoting that writing in opposition to (or through sheer lack of interest in) academic ideas about what constitutes literary value. Still, while an academically sanctioned anthology may not be necessary for the existence of the tradition, we should still take seriously its capacity to "interject the voices and works of [Native people] into the legitimated precincts of knowledge production—that is, into magazines and books, libraries, and schools and universities" and, as such, to "render [them] not merely visible but audible" (Radway 145).

Hopefully *Dawnland Voices* contributes something to the visibility and audibility of Native American literature from New England. If there is one thing that everyone involved in this book seems happy about, it's that it is only the beginning of much longer projects and collaborations—hopefully with some of the people who are reading it today.

Notes

1. See *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 24.3 (Fall 2012), a special issue that Margaret Lukens and I guest-edited.
2. Some newer anthologies are doing a better job of acknowledging New England Native writers; see, for instance, Parker's *Changing Is Not Vanishing*. One fascinating older exception, heavier on New England selections, was *Literature of the American Indian* (1973), edited by Thomas Sanders and a Narragansett-Wampanoag man, Walter Peek. Another unusually capacious anthology was *Returning the Gift*—not surprising, as it was edited by Abenaki author and publisher Joseph Bruchac. The Cherokee writer-editor MariJo Moore is usually attuned to writers from around the United States and Canada; she included Carol Bachofner (Abenaki) in *Genocide of the Mind*. Thoughtful anthologies focusing on other regions of the United States include those by Hobson, Tigerman and Ottery, and Sarris.

3. For a discussion of vanishing-Indian mythology in the South, see Geary Hobson, Janet McAdams, and Kathryn Walkiewicz's excellent anthology of Native writing from that region, *The People Who Stayed*.
4. Jean O'Brien's *Dispossession by Degrees* explains in considerable detail how New England people's land bases were reduced. Eva Garroutte's (Cherokee) *Real Indians* provides an indispensable introduction to how policies like blood-quantum regulations have legislated indigenous identities.
5. See, for instance, Boissevain.
6. E.g., Miles 192.
7. Among historians, Colin Calloway has led the way, publishing several groundbreaking essays by colleagues in *After King Philip's War*. Among archaeologists, Robert Goodby deserves special note, along with the other researchers represented in Jordan Kerber's *Cross-cultural Collaboration*.
8. This is the argument Womack has famously made in *Red on Red*. Other scholars working in this vein include Weaver, Warrior, Justice, Kelsey, Lisa Brooks, and the writers in Janice Acoose et al., *Reasoning Together*.
9. See Parker, *Invention of Native American Literature*, 83ff.
10. Silko, "Old-Time Indian Attack."
11. On Black Elk, see DeMallie.
12. Lisa Brooks, personal communication, August 16, 2011. I borrow the term "home in" from an influential essay by William Bevis, who described the plots of many Native American novels as organized around a return to homeland.
13. Following Renya Ramirez's important book *Native Hubs*, I made a similar argument about the poetry of Mihku Paul (Maliseet) and Alice Azure (Mi'kmaq) in "Rethinking Recognition."

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